


Malling Rural District Council.

Report
OF THE
Health of the District,
For the year 1897.



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TO THE MALLING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you my Annual Report on the Health of the District under my care.

	Census, 1881.		Census, 1891.
Number of Acres.....	38,527	.....	38,527.
Inhabited Houses.....	3,171	.....	4,849.
Population	22,660	.....	24,747.

The *Population*, estimated to the middle of 1897, amounted to 26,103.

The *Births* registered during the year numbered 676, including 352 males and 324 females. The birth rate is 25·89 per 1,000 of the estimated population, the rate for the preceding three years being 28·9, 28·3, 25·7, in 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively.

The *Deaths* registered in the District numbered 337, giving a rate of 12·91 per 1,000 of the estimated population; the rates for the three preceding years were 14·3, 15·7, and 14· in 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively. The rate for the 12 years preceding 1894 was 16·01. The present rate, especially when taken in comparison with that of preceding years, is therefore eminently satisfactory.

From the principal *Zymotic* diseases there have occurred 35 deaths, including

- 11 from Diphtheria.
- 10 „ Measles.
- 11 „ Diarrhœa.
- 1 „ Typhoid.
- 2 „ Whooping Cough.

No deaths occurred from either Scarlet Fever or Smallpox. The *Zymotic* death rate is therefore 1·34 per 1,000 of the estimated population as against 2·6 last year, and 1·4 and 1·8 in 1894 and 1895 respectively; the increase last year, however, was due almost entirely as I pointed out to you at the time—to the excessive measles mortality. The rate this year is satisfactory.

Under the Act for the *Compulsory Notice of Infectious Diseases*, 150 cases have been reported. They included

85	cases of	Diphtheria
13	,,	Scarlet Fever.
18	,,	Enteric Fever.
1	,,	Smallpox.
2	,,	Puerperal Fever.
31	,,	Erysipelas.

The number of cases reported is interesting when compared with the number notified in previous years before the opening of the Isolation Hospital, and though I do not attribute the marked decrease entirely to the protection offered by the Hospital, still there is no doubt it has operated beneficially.

In 1894 and 1895, before the opening of the Hospital, the cases numbered 242 and 252.

In 1896 and 1897, after the opening of the Hospital, the cases numbered 129 and 150.

Of *Diphtheria* 85 cases were reported during the year as against 55, 97, and 47 in 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively.

Snodland, with that part of Birling which practically forms part of the same small town, is responsible for 32 out of the 85 cases; East Malling had 12 cases; West Malling, 10; Aylesford, 8; Ditton, 6; Mereworth, 6; East Peckham, 2; Offham, 2; Addington, 4; Burham, 1; Eccles, 1; Watlington, 1.

The number of cases occurring in Snodland and Birling-by-Snodland needs special notice, last year also Snodland had more cases than any other parish in the district. As a result of careful investigation I have come to the conclusion that the pre-disposition to attack is probably due to the condition of the main sewers. A very large number of water closets from small houses empty themselves into the sewers, and a comparatively very small number of the closets have any water supply, consequently the sewage lies and stagnates in the house drains, and instead of entering the sewer fresh and comparatively odourless, it is probably washed on in a foul and offensive condition by an occasional pail of slop water, and so the sewer also becomes foul and offensive. The new automatic flushing tanks, now in process of completion, will no doubt mend matters to a certain extent, but no amount of flushing the main sewer will abolish the foul smell from the street ventilators unless the

houses are provided with the means of washing away their sewage matter whilst still fresh. Snodland has an excellent water supply, and in my opinion all houses having water closets should be provided also with the means of flushing them, yet, as I have pointed out, this condition holds in only a comparatively few instances. I have made enquiries also of your Inspector, and he informs me that Bye Law No. 68 is not even enforced for new houses, so the evil is still increasing. Those of you who have followed the enquiry into the recent Epidemic of Typhoid Fever in Maidstone, will have noticed how the same state of things existed there, and no doubt tended to aggravate the evil.

Of *Scarlet Fever* 13 cases occurred during the year ; there was no severe epidemic anywhere, and the cases were for the most part scattered, both as regards time and place.

Of *Enteric or Typhoid Fever* there occurred 18 cases ; of these, 16 were reported during the progress of the Maidstone epidemic, and 9 of the 16 undoubtedly contracted the disease in Maidstone ; 3 cases probably became infected away from home, but elsewhere than in Maidstone, 2 were secondary to the nursing of Typhoid patients, leaving 4 cases in all to be accounted for by causes arising within the district.

Of the 9 cases from Maidstone, several were servant girls, sent home whilst actually suffering from the disease. The first case of the kind that came under my notice I reported to you at the time, and on October 5th I reported to you fully the circumstances of the outbreak as it affected your district.

One case of *Small Pox* occurred at East Malling in April. The patient had not contracted the disease at the Mill for she had returned home from London well within the incubation period of the disease, and though the Medical Officer of Health for the district in question made careful enquiry with a negative result, she undoubtedly contracted the disease before her return home. The patient was isolated, all who were in any way connected with her were vaccinated, and the outbreak was arrested.

Measles epidemics visited those villages which escaped last year, and it became necessary to close the Schools at East Malling, Ditton and Aylesford, otherwise the district has been fairly free from the disease.

The *Isolation Hospital* has, with the exception of a few days, been occupied throughout the year. The staff has been changed and the existing arrangement of working the executive and nursing staff indepen-

dently has so far proved a success, though the system is still upon its trial. The total number of cases under treatment was 59—

Of Scarlet Fever, 13.

Of Diphtheria, 45.

Of Small Pox, 1.

There occurred 4 deaths—one patient was admitted in an almost dying condition, and 3 died of post diphtheritic paralysis.

The average stay in Hospital for cases of

Scarlet Fever was 49 days.

Diphtheria ,, 21 ,,

Small Pox ,, 42 ,,

The Mid Kent *Water* Company have completed their works for supplying Wouldham, Burham, and Eccles, and those villages have now good water, though at present only about 200 houses have availed themselves of the supply.

The following table kindly supplied by the Water Company's Official gives the number of houses in the district supplied and the increase since last year :—

	Snodland and Birling.	West Malling and Leybourne.	East Malling and Ditton.	Wouldham, Bur- ham, and Eccles.	TOTAL.
December 31, 1897	556	208	302	203	1269
December 31, 1896	496	187	286	—	969
Increase per year...	60	21	16	203	300
Increase per cent...	12 per cent	11 per cent	6 per cent.	203 per cent.	31 per cent

I append the report of the Inspector of Nuisances, and have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ARTHUR H. ROBERTS.

February, 1898.

“ST. LEONARDS,”

WEST MALLING,

February 4th, 1898.

Dr. A. H. Roberts,
Medical Officer of Health,
Malling Rural District Council.

Dear Sir,

I beg to report the following particulars of my work as Inspector of Nuisances and Surveyor of Buildings to the Malling Rural District Council for the year 1897.

NUISANCES.—

Accumulation of refuse...	...	...	...	...	68
Cesspools overflowing	...	...	...	...	35
Defective or insufficient drainage	...	...	...	...	282
Defective roofs and guttering	...	...	...	...	18
Dangerous wells	...	...	...	...	7
Defective paving	...	...	...	...	23
Filthy bakehouses	...	...	...	...	3
Filthy dwellings	..	...	...	...	13
Foul ditches	...	...	...	...	11
Hopper huts used for human habitation contrary to Bye-Laws	...	...	...	...	3
Houses unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	13
Houses without wholesome or sufficient water supply					171
Houses without sufficient drainage	...	...	...	...	10
Ill-constructed cesspools	...	...	...	...	17
Ill-constructed privies	...	...	...	...	93
Ill-constructed ashpits	...	...	...	...	10
Insufficient privy accommodation	...	...	...	...	7
Keeping animals so _{as} to be a nuisance	...	...	...	...	16
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	3
Privies overflowing	...	..	...	...	58
Total	...	...	...	...	861

The whole of the nuisances enumerated have been abated, with the exception of the paving and drainage to 5 cottages at Stanstead, and drainage and water supply to one house at Trottiscliffe, but are now in hand; I am pleased to report that the nuisances have been abated without any cases being referred to the Magistrates.

I have during the year made 3,410 inspections and re-inspections.

CANAL BOATS.—

During the year I have made 100 visits to the various Wharves and Docks in the district, but have only been able to make 18 inspections. I find that as soon as the vessels are moored alongside the Cabins are locked and the Captains not to be found. Of the 18 inspections made 14 were in order and four contravening the Act. Notices were duly served and the Canal Boats Act complied with. I found the boats generally clean and well-kept, and quite free from infectious disease.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.—

I have inspected at intervals during the year 50 Cowsheds and Dairies, and have generally found them clean and well-ventilated and with plenty of air space.

HOP PICKERS' DWELLINGS.—

I inspected 460 hopper houses and 270 tents. Four cases were brought before the Magistrates, 2 for not providing proper accommodation, 1 for offensive matter adjoining hopper houses. In these cases convictions were obtained and the full penalties inflicted), 1 case for not providing water supply was dismissed on the ground of water supply being obtainable 200 yards from the hop pickers' dwellings.

NEW STREETS AND BUILDINGS.—

During the year the Council approved of the plans for the construction of 26 houses, 1 forge, 1 cowshed, 2 schoolrooms, 36 additions to houses, and the construction of new streets and sewers known as the Avenue Estate, Snodland.

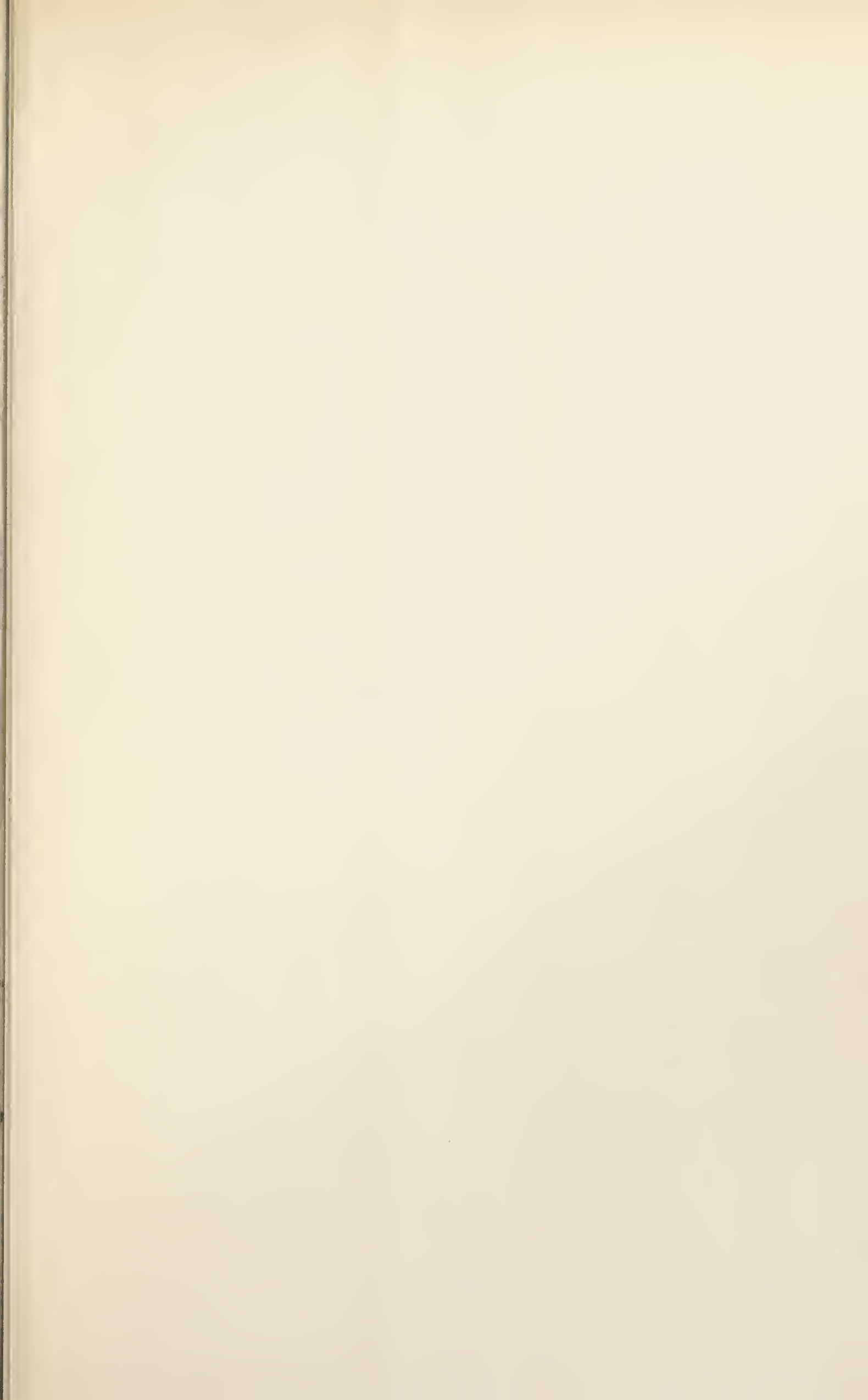
All new and reconstructed drains are tested by water before being approved by the Council.

You have all particulars of infectious cases registered. I trust that I have given sufficient detail of my work as Inspector and other duties connected with my office.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES SOUTER,

Inspector of Nuisances & Surveyor of Buildings
to the Malling Rural District Council.



Malling Rural District Council.

ARTHUR H. ROBERTS,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

West Malling, Kent.

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With Compliments.
